

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 061 135

SO 002 744

TITLE Research '70.
 INSTITUTION Toronto Board of Education (Ontario). Research Dept.
 PUB DATE 70
 NOTE 17p.
 EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.65 HC-\$3.29
 DESCRIPTORS *Academic Achievement; Achievement; Bilingualism; Comparative Analysis; *Educational Research; English (Second Language); Immigrants; *Language Research; Longitudinal Studies; Research Reviews (Publications); Socioeconomic Influences
 IDENTIFIERS *Canada; Toronto

ABSTRACT

Thirteen research reports on a wide variety of issues are annotated in this bibliography that is intended for interested school personnel. Descriptions of studies ranging from the diagnostic value of children's drawings to the effects of bilingualism are brief. Titles reflecting the content of the studies are: The Measurement of Socio-Economic Status: A Technical Note; A Consolidated Report on the "Draw-A-Classroom" Test; An Investigation of the Experimental French Programme at Bedford Park and Allenby Public Schools; Who Leaves and Why; Referrals to Child Adjustment Services: A Longitudinal Study Using Data from the Study of Achievement; School Achievement: A Preliminary Look at the Effects of Home; Early Education -- An Appraisal of Research; Language Backgrounds and Achievement in Toronto Schools; Classroom Management: Some Answers from the Behaviorists; Learning English as a Second Language; A Summary of Research Department Studies; Students of Non-Canadian Origin: Age on Arrival, Academic Achievement and Ability; School Achievement as Measured by Teacher Ratings and Standardized Achievement Tests; In-Service Programmes: Changing Teacher Attitudes. Related document is SO 002 745. (Author/SJM)

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RESEARCH 70

Introduction

In the past year, the Research Department has completed studies directed to a wide variety of issues, from the diagnostic value of children's drawings to the effects of bilingualism. These studies are described on the following pages.

The descriptions are brief and can be read very quickly. If one or more of the reports deal with a topic which you would like to study in more detail, fill out the order form on the last page and drop it in the mail.

The reports you request will be sent to you free of charge if you are an employee of the Toronto Board of Education or for a nominal fee if you are not connected with the Board.

What Is Socio-Economic Status?

THE MEASUREMENT OF SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS: A TECHNICAL NOTE

Report #63, 30 pp.

The Research Department has been engaged in a long-term study of the relationship between the home environment of the child and his achievement in school. Socio-economic status is one of the concepts which has been used to summarize many aspects of home environment.

The measurement of socio-economic status is based on the idea that each family occupies a particular position in society relative to others. People higher in status are able to contribute more to society because of their education and occupation. They in turn reap higher rewards in income, material possessions, and the esteem of the community.

The report discusses this basic theory of socio-economic status, and reviews the various ways it has been measured in the past, including a scale developed especially for use in Canada. The greater part of the report is devoted to these technical concerns. However, since the concept of socio-economic status appears in many research contexts, the report has some relevance to a general audience. If you have ever encountered this term and questioned its meaning, the report's discussion of this important concept will be enlightening.

What Do A Child's Drawings Reveal?

A CONSOLIDATED REPORT ON THE "DRAW-A-CLASSROOM" TEST -- A STUDY OF
THE DRAWING BEHAVIOUR OF CHILDREN IN TORONTO PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Report #74, 49 pp.

Everyone is aware that artistic productions reveal something about the personality of the artist. Psychologists have long been intrigued with the possibility of using artwork in a systematic way to diagnose personal maladjustment or to predict performance on some task.

The Research Department collected and analyzed 40,000 children's drawings to see if it was possible to assess developmental changes in mental activity, the effect of Junior Kindergarten, the probability that a child would later be referred to Child Adjustment Services, and a child's future competence in mathematics. The discussion of results is valuable to anyone interested in the scope of this type of measurement technique.

What Is It Like To Learn A Second Language?

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE EXPERIMENTAL FRENCH PROGRAMME
AT BEDFORD PARK AND ALLENBY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Report #75, 113 pp.

This report has three foci. It is first of all concerned with describing an experimental French programme in two public schools. The goals, techniques, and demands of the programme on the students are reported.

A consideration of one particular programme leads to a consideration of language learning in general: the second focus of the report. One important issue that researchers have battled over for years is the effect of learning a second language on the mental development of the child in other areas. Another area of concern is the age at which it is best to begin learning a second language. Motivation is another issue. Research has found that a student's reason for learning a second language is a crucial factor in determining his success.

The third focus of the report is a description of the feelings and opinions about language learning expressed by parents, teachers, administrators, and resource personnel. Their expressed attitudes reveal the motivations for second language learning found in the Toronto school system.

Who Leaves And Why?

WHO LEAVES AND WHY?: PUPIL ATTRITION IN TORONTO PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Selected Statistics From The Study Of Achievement

Report #79, 29 pp.

The Research Department's long-term study of pupil achievement includes data on the movement of students out of the Toronto school system. An analysis of pupil movement indicates that only 55 per cent of those entering Senior Kindergarten were still in the Toronto Board of Education seven years later. The proportion still in the original school is undoubtedly even smaller.

The larger attrition rates for some groups indicate difficulties in long-term planning for certain students. The high overall mobility rate suggests the need for some way of providing continuity for the mobile student.

Who Is Referred To Child Adjustment Services?

REFERRALS TO CHILD ADJUSTMENT SERVICES: A LONGITUDINAL STUDY USING
DATA FROM THE STUDY OF ACHIEVEMENT

Report #82, 49 pp.

The longitudinal study of achievement conducted by the Research Department followed 8700 children from junior and senior kindergarten through 6th grade. Over the time period, data were collected on the number and type of referrals to Child Adjustment Services.

It was found that the rate of referral was constant from year to year: about 4 per cent. The reason for referral, however, changed over time; for example, older children were increasingly likely to be referred for poor academic achievement, while referrals for behaviour problems declined. There were also variations in the referral rates of different types of students. Monolingual children were more likely to be referred than bilingual children, and boys were referred more frequently than girls.

A careful study of the referral patterns is an interesting comment on changes in the classroom from kindergarten to 6th grade and on the problems that different kinds of children have.

Are Parents Responsible For Their Child's Success?

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT: A PRELIMINARY LOOK AT THE EFFECTS OF THE HOME

Report #83, 50 pp.

Why do some children succeed in school while others do not? It seems obvious that the home environment of the child is at least partly responsible for his level of achievement.

But a home is many things. The purpose of this report is to try and identify those aspects of a child's home life which account for his performance in school.

Over 700 parents of fifth grade pupils were interviewed in one of seven different languages. They were asked various questions about their educational and occupational goals for the child, their involvement with the school and the world at large, and the intellectual atmosphere of the home.

The results show that a child who is successful in school is likely to come from a home where his parents want and expect him to go far in school, and where the parents both read themselves and provide books suitable for him to read.

Data were also collected on the socio-economic level of the home. Socio-economic status, however, is not a good predictor of school success. The children of more successful parents were not necessarily more successful themselves.

This study is one of a series of reports investigating various aspects of achievement.

Does Early Education Make A Difference?

EARLY EDUCATION -- AN APPRAISAL OF RESEARCH

Report #84, 48 pp.

Large numbers of children enter school without the basic social and intellectual skills necessary for success. Educators and psychologists have come to feel that an impoverished environment is often responsible for a child's failure to mature at the normal rate. This is particularly true of children living in inner-city areas. In recent years public and private agencies have allocated large sums of money for the support of early education programmes which are designed to supplement the experience of the deprived child before he enters regular kindergarten.

As documented in this report, programmes in early education are characterized by a wide variety of educational philosophies, goals, and methods. In spite of the diversity of approaches, no programme has been shown to have a significant and permanent effect in bettering the school performance of the "culturally disadvantaged" child. Some programmes have achieved limited success for short periods of time, but the long-term results have continued to be disappointing.

In discussing some of the problems involved in designing and evaluating such programmes, the report touches on more general questions relating to the goals of education as a whole, and the problem of integrating culturally diverse groups into society.

Is The Bilingual Child At A Disadvantage in School?

LANGUAGE BACKGROUNDS AND ACHIEVEMENT IN TORONTO SCHOOLS

Report #85, 36 pp.

Toronto schools serve many students who did not learn English as their first language. Some of these children are new immigrants. Others are the children of parents who although living in Canada for many years have maintained a strong identity with their mother country. Chinese, French, German, Greek, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, and Ukrainian are some of the languages represented in our city.

Children from each of these eight language groups, both first and second generation immigrants, were given achievement tests which measured a variety of skills: vocabulary, computation, English, and general intelligence.

An analysis of the scores shows that different language groups have different strengths and weaknesses. The results are presented in sufficient detail for a profile to emerge of the relative abilities of each group.

A comparison of the achievement of children who speak only English with those learning English as a second language, shows that bilingualism is not necessarily a handicap, and may even be an advantage.

What To Do With The Problem Child?

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT: SOME ANSWERS FROM THE BEHAVIOURISTS

Report #86, 38 pp.

Behaviour Modification is a relatively new technique for helping the emotionally disturbed or problem child. It is based on the assumption that behaviour which is rewarded tends to be repeated, and behaviour which goes unrewarded is not repeated. A problem child is one who has learned a behaviour pattern which society considers unacceptable. For one reason or another, parents and teachers have inadvertently rewarded him for behaviours which they nonetheless dislike. The child needs, not counselling, or psychoanalysis, or probing into his past, but exposure to a new pattern of rewards which will encourage more acceptable behaviour.

The report illustrates and discusses the full range of issues raised by this research from the basic theory, to the details of carrying out such a programme, to the problem of maintaining and generalizing the new behaviour to new situations.

This report was prepared in cooperation with the Child Adjustment Services. It is not a manual for designing a behaviour modification programme. It does serve to introduce basic ideas related to the technique.

What Do We Know About New Canadians In Toronto?

LEARNING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE: A SUMMARY
OF RESEARCH DEPARTMENT STUDIES (MARCH, 1970)

Report #87, 14 pp.

Many questions are raised by the presence within the school system of students from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Can they overcome the handicap of having to learn English as a second language? What problems do they face in school? What cultural factors influence their academic achievement?

The Research Department undertook a series of studies to answer these and related questions. This report summarizes the results of these studies. It is a useful resource for the person who is interested in the problems of New Canadians, and either wants an overview of what is known about their situation in Toronto or wants direction to specific information. The report contains some interesting implications for the general problem of integrating diverse groups into one society.

Is The New Canadian Handicapped?

STUDENTS OF NON-CANADIAN ORIGIN: AGE ON ARRIVAL,
ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND ABILITY

Report #88, 40 pp.

Data were collected on the academic achievement of New Canadian children. It was found that a child arriving in Canada before the age of 7 is not disadvantaged in school. This even held true for children coming from a non-English speaking country.

Children arriving after 7 years of age were handicapped, the degree of difficulty increasing with age on arrival. In this case, a language difference did appear: children from non-English speaking countries were the most disadvantaged.

These differences are most apparent on the tests of English competency, although other areas of performance are also affected.

Do Teachers Know How Well Their Students Are Doing?

SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENT AS MEASURED BY TEACHER RATINGS
AND STANDARDIZED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

Report #89, 56 pp.

Teacher ratings of their pupils were compared with the pupils' performance on standardized measures of achievement. The relationship between teacher ratings and standardized scores was fairly strong, but far from perfect. Teacher ratings, however, were better predictors of performance than were I.Q. scores.

A comparison of the ratings of the same pupils in grades 3 and 6 shows that a teacher's evaluation of a student during one year is only a fair predictor of how his teacher will evaluate him in later years.

These results suggest that although teachers have some knowledge of the performance of their pupils, care is required in the use of teacher ratings to assess students, and in teachers' use of ratings by a pupil's former teachers.

How Successful Are In-Service Training Programmes?

IN-SERVICE PROGRAMMES: CHANGING TEACHER ATTITUDES?

Report #90, 83 pp.

An in-service training programme was designed to familiarize teachers in an inner-city school with the resource personnel available to them, and to present the problems of working with the children in such schools. It was hoped that the presentations and discussions would encourage a child-centered, concept-oriented philosophy of education.

A programme of evaluation showed that there were no changes in teacher attitudes as a result of participation in the in-service training. A later questionnaire, however, revealed that teachers felt the programme played a useful role in introducing them to other teachers and increasing communication among the staff.

Although the explicit goals of the training were not realized, other important results did occur. This finding emphasizes the need to carefully design programmes to achieve the specific results that are desired.

REQUEST FOR RESEARCH SERVICE PUBLICATIONS

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